EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING

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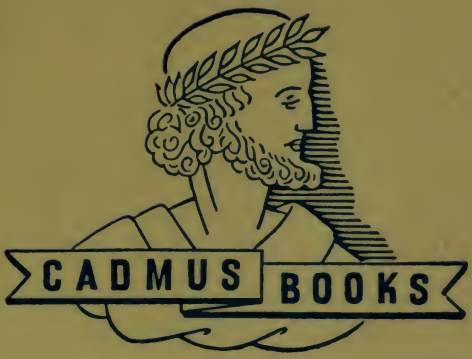

EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING

BY DOROTHY ALDIS

Author of *Here, There, and Everywhere*

Poems can be just as much fun as stories. In some ways they are more fun. They tell a whole story in just a few lines. They can make you laugh. They can make you think of things you never thought about before. And sometimes they can almost make you cry.

This book has little poems about all kinds of things. You will think they were written by a boy or girl like yourself. This child has fun with the same things that you do—flowers and the wind, ice on the streets in winter, presents from Uncle Timothy, and many other things. She is also puzzled by some of the things that puzzle you.

Many of the verses will make you laugh, verses like

> Rabbits and squirrels
> Are furry and fat,
> And all of the chickens
> Have feathers and that
> Is why when it's raining
> They need not stay in
> The way children do who have
> Only their skin.

All the way through, these poems are fun, whether you read them to yourself or read them out loud. Maybe you will want to write some verses of your own, after you read these.

* *

EVERYTHING
and ANYTHING

EVERYTHING *and* ANYTHING

By
DOROTHY ALDIS

Drawings by
HELEN D. JAMESON

When I was young
I dared to sing
Of everything
And anything! . . .
And, though an older wight I be,
My soul hath still such Ecstasy
That, on a pulse, I sing and sing
Of Everything, and Anything!
—From *The Pit of Bliss*, by JAMES STEPHENS.

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To Mary Cornelia and Owen Aldis
and All the Other Children

The covers now are opened wide
So turn the page and step inside
And you will find some children who
Are doing things you always do:
Playing games or getting dressed,
Hearing stories they like best,
Sitting at their cream of wheat
And being Bad, or Good, or Neat.
They'd like to have you stay with them
For a while and play with them—
Oh, please come in. For they are only
Picture children and feel lonely.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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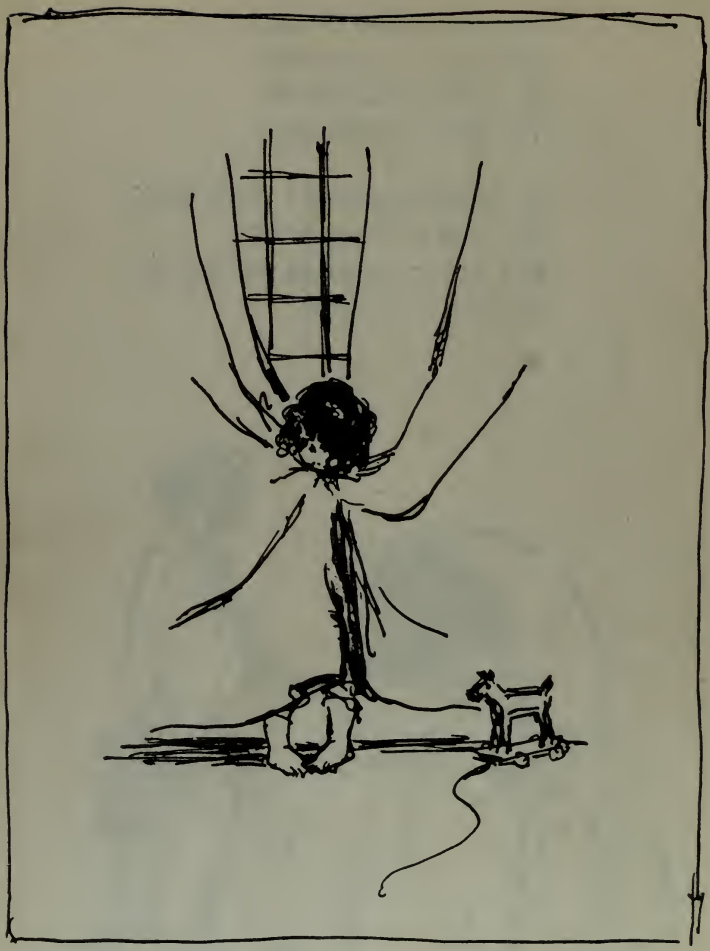
EVERYTHING
and ANYTHING

LITTLE

I am the sister of him
And he is my brother.
He is too little for us
To talk to each other.

So every morning I show him
My doll and my book;
But every morning he still is
Too little to look.



HIDING

I'm hiding, I'm hiding,
And no one knows where;
For all they can see is my
Toes and my hair.

And I just heard my father
Say to my mother—
"But, darling, he must be
Somewhere or other;

Have you looked in the inkwell?"
And Mother said, "Where?"
"In the INK WELL," said Father. But
I was not there.

Then "Wait!" cried my mother—
"I think that I see
Him under the carpet." But
It was not me.

"Inside the mirror's
A pretty good place,"
Said Father and looked, but saw
Only his face.

"We've hunted," sighed Mother,
"As hard as we could
And I AM so afraid that we've
Lost him for good."

Then I laughed out aloud
And I wiggled my toes
And Father said—"Look, dear,
I wonder if those

Toes could be Benny's.
There are ten of them. See?"
And they WERE so surprised to find
Out it was me!

CERTAIN DAYS

On certain days my mother says
She wishes for her sake
I had a little tail to wag
And didn't have to make
Such lots of noise to show I'm glad—
Or just that I'm awake.

THE SAND PILE

When I sit in the sand pile
It's warm where I sit
Lovely and hot and not
Scratchy one bit.

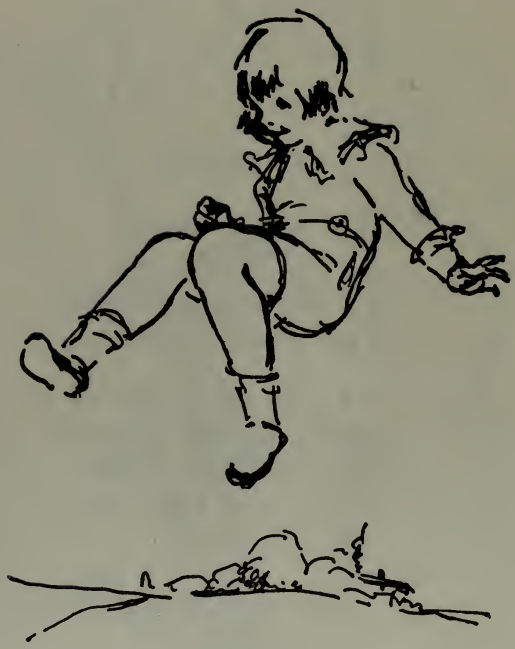
When I dig with my shovel
The sand grows much wetter
And that is the sand that is
Very much better

For castles or tunnels—
(Except when I bake
Of course I use dry sand
To frosting my cake.)

CLOUDS

If I had a spoon
As tall as the sky
I'd dish out the clouds
That go slip-sliding by.

I'd take them right in
And give them to cook
And see if they tasted
As good as they look.



DIFFERENCES

Both my little pockets jingle
All the time with every single
Thing that I might want some day.

But Grown-Ups' pockets are so funny—
All they keep in them is money.

Both my little shoes are brown and
I can make them run around and
Jump so high and gay.

But Grown-Ups' shoes are slow and
grand
And never get filled up with sand.

HAREBELLS

The harebells shaking out their blue
With every wind that passes
Are running up the little hill
And in and out the grasses.

They have friends: the golden rod
The shooting star, and aster—
They ALL are running up the hill
Only some go faster.

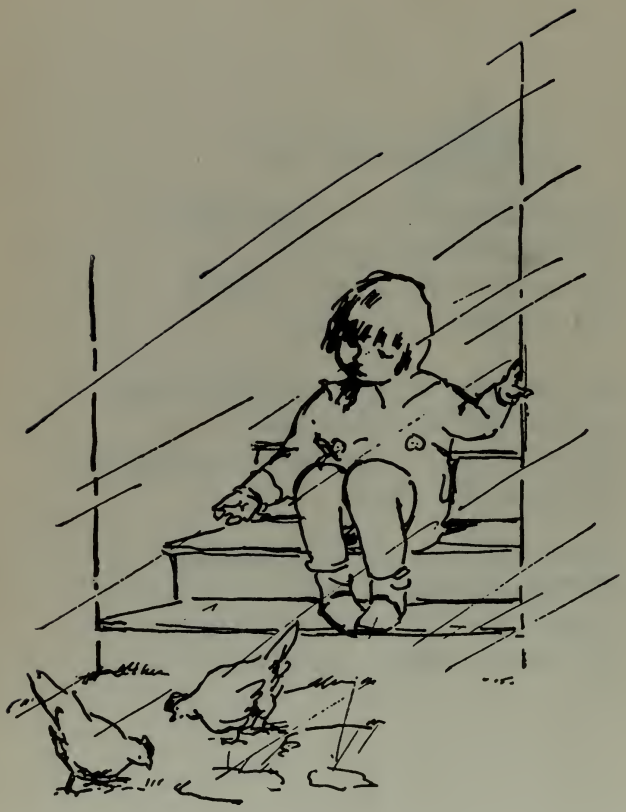
For harebells, blue harebells,
The sweet and windy hearted,
Are up and down the other side
Before the rest have started!

GROWN UP

I'm growing up, my mother says—
Today she said I'd grown;
The reason why is this: Now I
Can do things all alone.

And though I'm glad that I don't need
Someone to brush my hair
And wash my hands and face and button
Buttons everywhere.

Although I'm very glad indeed
To help myself instead,
I hope that I won't have to try
TO TUCK MYSELF IN BED.



THE REASON

Rabbits and squirrels
Are furry and fat,
And all of the chickens
Have feathers and that

Is why when it's raining
They need not stay in
The way children do who have
Only their skin.

LIONS AND DRAGONS

Snap-Dragons and Dande-Lions
Are not so very wild—
I never yet saw one forget
And try to hurt a child.

A Dande-Lion never ROARS
Not even once, for fun;
Nor waves his tail with angry wail–
Because he hasn't one!

A Snap-Dragon will never snap
No matter how he feels,
Except to try to catch a fly
To brighten up his meals.

THE STORM

In my bed all safe and warm
I like to listen to the storm.
The thunder rumbles loud and grand—
The rain goes splash and whisper; and
The lightning is so sharp and bright
It sticks its fingers through the night.

SNOW-IN-THE-CITY

When they shovel snow in wagons,
When they carry it away with
Great big horses, is it taken
To some other child to play with?

Is he looking out his window?
Does he wonder where they're staying?
Is he wishing they would hurry up
So he could start his playing?

Do they roll up with their wagons?
And as soon as they have found him,
In great mountains white and shining
Do they dump the snow around him?

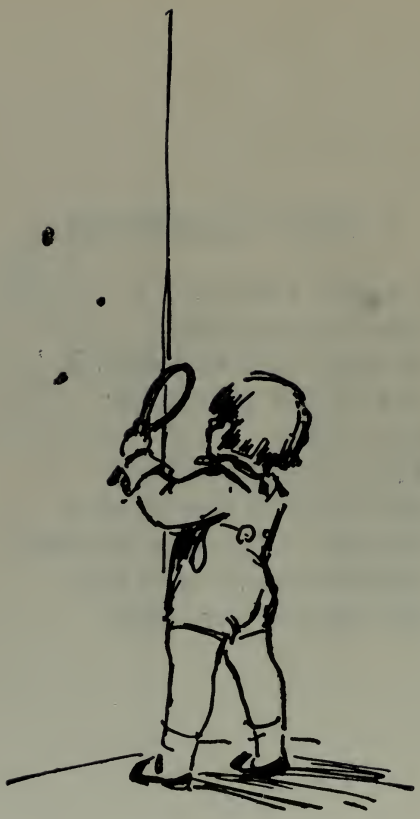
THE GOLDFISH

My darling little goldfish
Hasn't any toes;
He swims around without a sound
And bumps his hungry nose.

He can't get out to play with me,
Nor I get in to him,
Although I say: "Come out and play,"
And he—"Come in and swim."

WHAT HAPPENED

I caught a fish and I
Gave it to my father.
He took it and he cooked it
And he said he'd rather
Eat my fish
Than any other fishes,
And when he had tasted it
He said: "That was delicious."
And there wasn't ANY left
On either of our dishes.



FLIES

Flies walk on ceilings
And straight up the walls
Not even the littlest
Fly ever falls.

And I am quite certain
If *I* were a fly
I'd leave my home and go
Walk on the sky.

WHAT I WOULD DO

If one day my nurse should say
Just before my lunch or tea,
"Oh, yesterday quite by mistake
I gave your mug and plate away,"
It would not trouble me.

And *I* know where I'd eat:

Off of a stone;
A nice and flat and
Smooth white stone.
I'd eat off that and
Drink from harebells—
(I guess twenty
Filled with milk
Would be plenty.)

And if one night my mother said
Just before the lights were lit,
"Oh, yesterday quite by mistake
I gave away your little bed,"
I would be glad of it!

And *I* know where I'd sleep:

Up in the hay
Where it's nice and warm and
Twice last year
Some kittens were born and
THAT'S where I'd sleep
In the sweet and musty
Hay and get
My hair all dusty.

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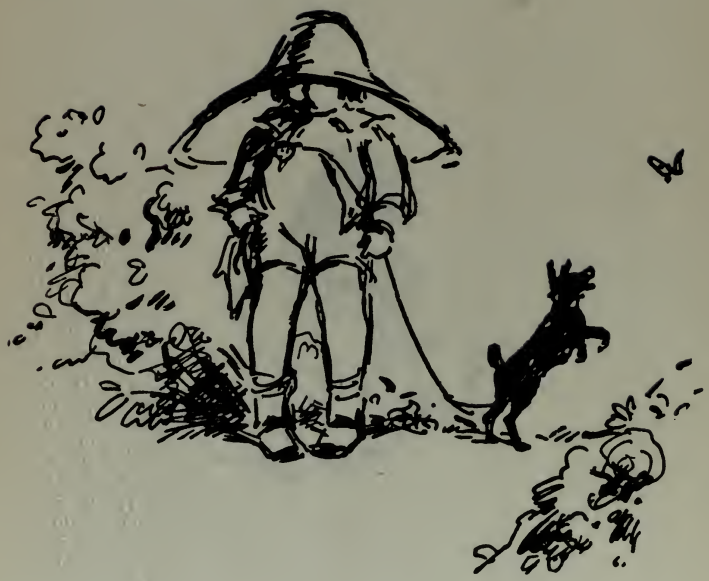
EARLY

I was up so tip toe early
That the flowers were all pearly
As they waited in their places
For the sun to dry their faces.



HOT WEATHER

I never saw a puppy that
Wore a little streamer hat.

I never met a rabbit who
Had a dress of pink or blue.

I never saw a squirrel trail
Hair ribbons upon his tail.

And nobody has ever heard
Of shirt and panties on a bird!

Oh, why must I, however hot,
Wear EVERYTHING that they do not?

A GOOD THING

When I've finished with my tub
I always play about
With my little sponge and then
I pull the stopper out.

And every day I'm very glad
That I am big and tall:
To slip down through the stopper
hole
Would not be fun at all!

CHOOSING

It must be dull to be the street
And just see feet and feet and feet;
It must be dull to be the sky!
But of the two I think that I
Would rather be a slice of sky
Than a sidewalk or a street:
Stars when they go skipping by
Must be prettier than feet.

AT SUPPER TIME

A little girl at supper time
Must not be a silly,
Or she will surely turn into
A Spotty or a Spilly.

A good child drinks her soup up first,
Being careful of it,
Then if her carrot's hard to catch
She is allowed to shove it.

And last there is her cup of milk.
As soon as she has drunk it
She may put her cup down
And begin her junket.

WHEN

When people's clothes
Are made with spots
I jump around
Between the dots.

When wall paper
Is vines or trees
I lie in bed
And climb in these,

And when in trains
I sit so still
I'm hopscotching
From hill to hill.

LUNCHEONS

See on the lawn how they're getting their lunch-
eon!
Nice little wriggeling worms to munch on—
Worms for their cereal, worms for their egg,
And an apple sauce worm which they eat on one
leg.

Sundays, of course, they may get something better
If it has rained and the garden is wetter:
Worms for their chops and a nice big plate
Of lovely ice cream worm with hot choc-o-late.

FEET

There are things
Feet know
That hands never will:
The exciting
Pounding feel
Of running down a hill;

The soft cool
Prickliness
When feet are bare
Walking in
The summer grass
To most anywhere;

Or dabbling in
Water all
Slip-sliddering through toes—
(Nicer than
Through fingers though why
No one really knows.)

"Toes, tell my
Fingers," I
Said to them one day,

"Why it's such
Fun just to
Wiggle and play."

But toes just
Looked at me
Solemn and still.
Oh, there are things
Feet know
That hands NEVER WILL.

SINGING

Little birds sing with their beaks
In the apple trees;
But little crickets in the grass
Are singing with their knees.

HANDS

There are things
Hands do
That feet never can. Oh
Lots of things
Like stringing beads
Or playing the piano;

Or plaiting little
Stems of grass
Into a little braid
For an acorn
Dolly's head
That somebody has made.

Or shelling slippery
Pods of peas
So the peas can pop;
Or holding things
Quite tightly so
They will not slip or drop.

"Hands, tell my
Toes," I
Said to them one day,

"How you learned
To do so much
More useful things than they."

But hands just
Looked at me
And proudly began:
"Oh, there are things
Hands do
That feet NEVER CAN."

PLEASE

Please is a wonderful word. When I say it
Like: "Please may we play hide and seek,"—then
we play it.
Or, "Please will you read me Black Sambo," or,
"Mummy,
PLEASE may I slide in the tub on my tummy?"

MISTER CARROT

Nice Mister Carrot
Makes curly hair,
His head grows underneath the ground—
His feet up in the air.

And early in the morning
I find him in his bed
And give his feet a great big pull
And OUT comes his head!

A THOUGHT

It is very nice to know
That I am made so neatly
And that my little skin and bones
Cover me completely.

For I should blush for very shame
If when I was a-thinking
My skin and bones should come undone
And leave my mind a-blinking,

And all my wicked thoughts and feelings
Naked in the light.
Oh, I'm extremely glad to feel
My fastenings are tight.

UNCLE TIMOTHY

Nice Uncle Timothy's never at home.
He's sometimes in Norway and sometimes in Rome.
He travels around with a big brown sack
And we have to go kiss him when he gets back.

We like Uncle Timothy, only his nose it
Snorts and shakes whenever he blows it,
And on his face there are patches of prickles
Wherever we kiss him, and each prickle tickles.

Nice Uncle Timothy opens his sack
And shows us the playthings he has brought back—
Dollies from Norway and dollies from Rome—
So we have to go kiss him when he gets home.

AWAY

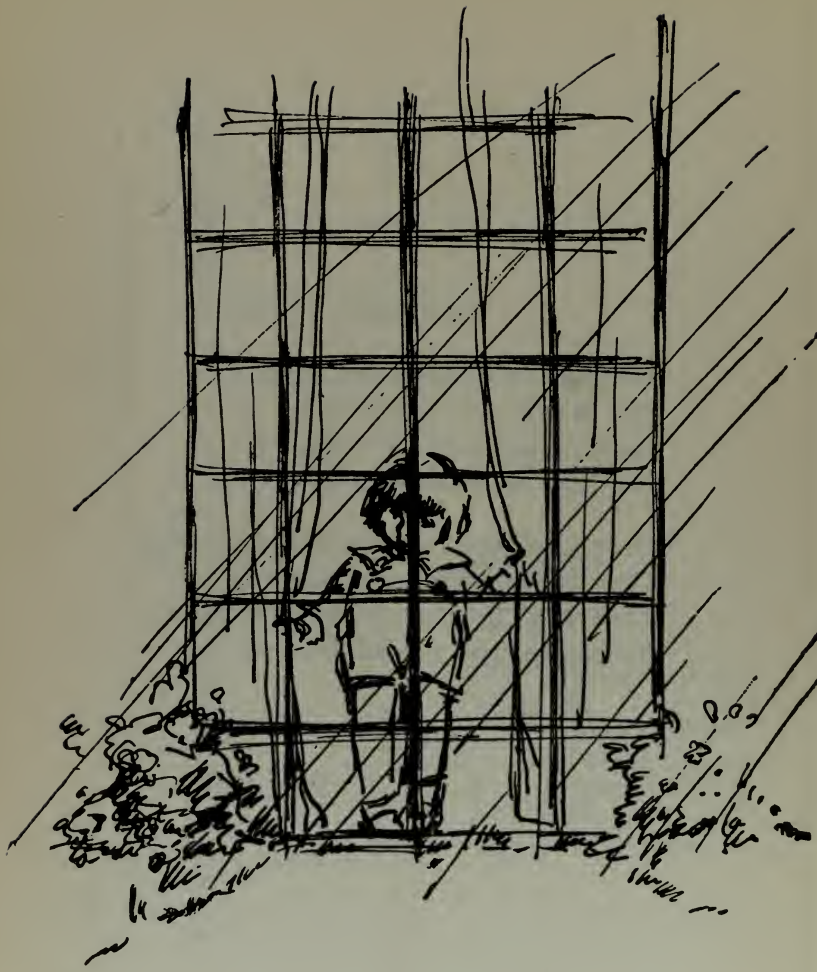
Far-away is very far
Like riding in a bus or car
But near-away is near:
It's talking in the kitchen or
Seeing what the door bell's for.

And so I always try to know
WHICH away she's going to go:
Near-away—when I can do
Anything I'm wanting to,
Or far-away—when I must be
Good till she gets back to me.

DRESSES

When my mother is not there
Her dresses hang so sadly
In the closet near the stair,
For they are feeling badly.

They look so straight when she is gone,
They're droopier and thinner —
They have a kind of patient look—
As though they needed dinner.



THE RAIN

The rain is raising prickles
In my little pool
And washing all the dirty worms
Pink and beautiful,

And mussing up the dandelions'
Fuzzy yellow hairs
And making me come in the house
And go and play upstairs.

NIGHT AND MORNING

The morning sits outside afraid
Until my mother draws the shade;

Then it bursts in like a ball,
Splashing sun all up the wall.

And the evening is not night
Until she's tucked me in just right
And kissed me and turned out the light.

Oh, if my mother went away
Who would start the night and day?

FRIENDS

Children who are friends do not
Always see each other;
If it rains or they are bad
They stay home with their mother.

But twice a day and every day,
No matter what the weather,
Little toothbrushes and teeth
HAVE to play together.

BROOMS

On stormy days
When the wind is high
Tall trees are brooms
Sweeping the sky.

They swish their branches
In buckets of rain,
And swash and sweep it
Blue again.

GOOD CHILDREN

Children who are brave and good
Always do the things they should.

Even when it happens to
Be something they don't want to do.

Oh, every child (if he has hair)
Climbs into the barber's chair!

SNOW

The fenceposts wear marshmallow hats
On a snowy day;
Bushes in their night gowns
Are kneeling down to pray—
And all the trees have silver skirts
And want to dance away.

RADIATOR LIONS

George lives in an apartment and
His mother will not let
Him keep a dog or polliwog
Or rabbit for a pet.

So he has Radiator-Lions.
(The parlor is the zoo.)
They love to fight but will not bite
Unless he tells them to.

And days when it is very cold
And he can't go outdoors
They glower and they lower and they
Crouch upon all fours

And roar most awful roarings and
Gurgle loud and mad.
Up their noses water goeses—
THAT'S what makes them bad.

But he loves Radiator-Lions!
He's glad, although they're wild,
He hasn't dogs and polliwogs
Like any other child!

WINTER

The street cars are
Like frosted cakes—
All covered up
With cold snow flakes.

The horses' hoofs
Scrunch on the street;
Their eyelashes
Are white with sleet.

And everywhere
The people go
With faces TICKLED
By the snow.

ICE

When it is the winter time
I run up the street
And I make the ice laugh
With my little feet—
"Crickle, crackle, crickle
Crrreeet, crrreeet, crrreeet."

HER SMILE

It is so curly on her mouth
I love to see it there;
It comes from I don't quite know what,
It goes I don't know where. . . .

MOUTHS

I wish I had two little mouths
Like my two hands and feet—
A little mouth to talk with
And one that just could eat.

Because it seems to me mouths have
So many things to do—
All the time they want to talk
They are supposed to chew!

EVERYBODY SAYS

Everybody says
I look just like my mother.
Everybody says
I'm the image of Aunt Bee.
Everybody says
My nose is like my father's
But *I* want to look like ME!

NAUGHTY SOAP SONG

Just when I'm ready to
Start on my ears,
That is the time that my
Soap disappears.

It jumps from my fingers and
Slithers and slides
Down to the end of the
Tub, where it hides.

And acts in a most diso-
Bedient way
AND THAT'S WHY MY SOAP'S GROWING
THINNER EACH DAY.

THE SPRINKLER

The sprinkler is what's fun to see
Underneath our big elm tree.

It whirls around its big wet drops,
First on mother's pretty phlox
And last on father's hollyhocks.

And all their little faces get
So very, very nice and wet.

And when no one is there to see
I run and get some drops on me.

SOMERSAULT

I somersault just like a clown
And all the trees turn upside down.

The sky is not the sky at all—
It changes to a high blue wall

And every little buttercup
Looks down at me instead of up.

THE PUFFER

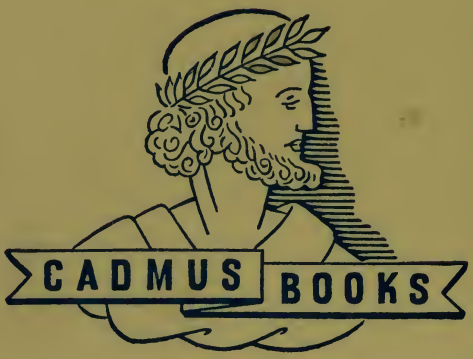
I am a Dandelion Puffer!
I puff all the hair
Off of the dandelion's heads
Into the air.

And when their hair is all floated
I split up their feet
And suck them down under my tongue
Till they're curly and neat.

And when I have finished I put them
Along the porch floor,
And go out in the garden again
To look for some more.

SKIPPING ROPES

Someday
Jane shall
Have, she
Hopes,
Rainbows
For her
Skipping
Ropes.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